

First Confirmed Case of Omicron Variant Detected in the United States

Media Statement

For Immediate Release: Wednesday, December 1, 2021

Contact: [Media Relations](#)

(404) 639-3286

The California and San Francisco Departments of Public Health have confirmed that a recent case of COVID-19 among an individual in California was caused by the Omicron variant (B.1.1.529). The individual was a traveler who returned from South Africa on November 22, 2021. The individual had mild symptoms that are improving, is self-quarantining and has been since testing positive. All close contacts have been contacted and have tested negative.

Genomic sequencing was conducted at the University of California, San Francisco and the sequence was confirmed at CDC as being consistent with the Omicron variant. This will be the first confirmed case of COVID-19 caused by the Omicron variant detected in the United States.

On November 26, 2021, the World Health Organization (WHO) classified a new variant, B.1.1.529, as a Variant of Concern and named it Omicron and on November 30, 2021, the United States also classified it as a Variant of Concern. CDC has been actively monitoring and preparing for this variant, and we will continue to work diligently with other U.S. and global public health and industry partners to learn more. Despite the detection of Omicron, Delta remains the predominant strain in the United States.

The recent emergence of the Omicron variant (B.1.1.529) further emphasizes the importance of vaccination, boosters, and [general prevention strategies](#) needed to protect against COVID-19. Everyone 5 and older should get vaccinated and boosters are recommended for everyone 18 years and older.

For more information on the Omicron variant visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/index.html>.

###

[U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES](#) 

CDC works 24/7 protecting America's health, safety and security. Whether disease start at home or abroad, are curable or preventable, chronic or acute, or from human activity or deliberate attack, CDC responds to America's most pressing health threats. CDC is headquartered in Atlanta and has experts located throughout the United States and the world.